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Dear Co-Chairs Senator Flexer and Representative Blumenthal,  
Vice-Chairs Senator Slap and Representative Morin-Bello,  
Ranking Members Senator Sampson and Representative Mastrofrancesco,  
and Distinguished Members of the GAE Committee:

For the past eight years, I have been an ambassador and advocate for the Alzheimer's Association – Connecticut Chapter. During that time, I have met countless family members caring for loved ones with Alzheimer's Disease or other dementias. On their behalf and that of innumerable other caregivers, **I am writing in support of H.B. No. 5004, S.B. No. 1064, S.J. No 29, and H.J. No. 1, and conditional support of S.B. No. 1057 and H.B. No. 6693.**

People with Alzheimer's or other dementias, as the disease progresses, require *constant* caregiving. A person with advanced dementia depends on family members for even the most basic activities of daily living – eating, dressing, bathing, toileting, and staying safe from falls, injury, and wandering. Family caregiving can be an all-consuming responsibility. There is little respite for family caregivers. Hiring outside help is prohibitively expensive for many, many families. Spouses/partners, adult children, and siblings sacrifice a great deal as family caregivers. The constraints on their time imposed by caregiving often lead to financial insecurity due to the need to limit work hours, neglecting preventive (but time-consuming) healthcare, and social isolation. An inflexible voting schedule and the lack of “no excuse absentee voting” effectively punishes caregivers for their commitment to family by disenfranchising them. Early Voting and No Excuse Absentee Voting will allow caregivers the opportunity to make the arrangements necessary to participate in our fundamental role as citizens.

Please consider these dedicated individuals and provide for **Early Voting** that:

- Covers at least 14 days, including two weekends, and early morning and evening hours
- Guarantees fair access to voting in all towns by providing a minimum of Early Voting locations with the number determined by the population of age-eligible voters
- Allows for same-day registration during the Early Voting period
- Provides sufficient funds for implementing Early Voting
- Applies to all elections: general, special, and municipal, as well as to referendums

I also urge you to actively support **No Excuse Absentee Voting**. Voting is the right and responsibility that upholds our representative government. Our state benefits when it supports and encourages as much participation as possible. Voters should be given an opportunity on the ballot in 2024 to weigh in on No Excuse Absentee Voting.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Mary-Kathryn Harrity*

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